

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 OMB-01 AID-05 ACDA-12 /118 W
-----114338 180629Z /11

R 161530Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8549
INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GERMANY

C O N F I D E N T I A L ALGIERS 1528

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, NATO, SS, CD, MO, MR, FR, DA, AG, US
SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S TOURS D'HORIZON WITH SENIOR GOA MFA OFFICIALS,
PART II

REF: ALGIERS 1526(NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: MFA SECYGEN, MEETING AMBASSADOR IN PRESENCE OF MFA DIR-
GEN OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS PREPARATORY TO AMBASSADOR'S RETURN TO
WASHINGTON ON CONSULTATIONS, EXPRESSED STRONG INTEREST IN OBTAINING
USG POSITION ON FRENCH MILITARY INTERVENTION IN SAHARA AND ON "NATO
ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE OF AND INVOLVEMENT IN" MOST RECENT JAGUAR ATTACK
ON POLISARIO. SECYGEN ALSO CHARACTERIZED FRENCH MILITARY INTERVEN-
TION IN SAHARA AND CHAD AS FIRST TIME PERMANENT MEMBER OF UNSC HAD
SENT TROOPS INTO AFRICA AND CLAIMED GOA FEELS DIRECTLY THREATENED
BY FRENCH DELIVERIES OF SAM MISSILES TO MOROCCO. AMBASSADOR REQUESTS
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GUIDANCE FROM DEPARTMENT ON ALLEGATIONS RE NATO.

2. ON MAY 16, I MET FOR AN INFORMAL TOUR D' HORIZON WITH MFA SECYGEN
MISSOUM SBIH AND MFA DIRGEN OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS ABDELKADER BOUS-
SELHAM. HAVING ALREADY OBTAINED THE OFFICIAL GOA VIEWS ON A WIDE
RANGE OF SUBJECTS IN THE COURSE OF MY MAY 14 MEETING WITH KHERBI
OF THE MFA (SEE REFTEL), I AKSED SBIH (WHO SPOKE FOR HIMSELF AND

BOUSSELHAM) WHETHER THERE WERE ANY SUBJECTS WHICH THE GOA WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN HAVING ME RAISE WITH THE USG DURING MY CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON. SBIH REPLIED THERE WERE TWO SUCH SUBJECTS WHICH CURRENTLY CONCERN THE GOA: (A) THE USG POSITION ON THE FRENCH MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE SAHARA CONFLICT, AND (B) NATO ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE OF, AND INVOLVEMENT IN, THE MOST RECENT FRENCH JAGUAR ATTACK ON THE POLISARIO.

3. USG POSITION ON FRENCH MILITARY INTERVENTION: THE GOA GENUINELY APPRECIATES U.S. NEUTRALITY IN THE SAHARA CONFLICT AS EVIDENCED BY ITS INSISTANCE ON STRICT ADHERENCE TO THE TERMS OF THE U.S. MOROCCAN MILITARY AGREEMENT PREVENTING USE OF U.S.-SUPPLIED MILITARY EQUIPMENT BEYOND MOROCCO'S BORDERS. HOWEVER, THE GOA FEARS THE FRENCH ARE INTERPRETING USG SILENCE ON THEIR MILITARY INTERVENTION AS IMPLICITLY CONDONING THEIR ACTION AND ARE, THEREFORE, ENCOURAGED TO CONTINUE. SBIH ADMITTED THE GOA IS EQUALLY CONCERNED OVER SOVIET SILENCE ON THE FRENCH INTERVENTION. AT THE SAME TIME, THE GOA WANTS US TO UNDERSTAND THAT CONTINUED FRENCH MILITARY INTERVENTION IN AFRICAN CONFLICTS, INCLUDING CHAD, IS THE MAIN STUMBLING BLOCK IN PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS TO IMPROVE FRANCO-ALGERIAN RELATIONS. THE GOA HOPES I WILL RETURN FROM WASHINGTON WITH A CLARIFICATION OF THE U.S. POSITION ON FRENCH INTERVENTION. IN THIS CONNECTION, SBIH SAID THE GOA WELCOMED THE RECENT STATEMENTS BY THE DANISH FOREIGN MINISTER CONDEMNING ALL FOREIGN MILITARY INTERVENTION IN AFRICA, SPECIFICALLY INCLUDING FRANCE.

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4. NATO INVOLVEMENT IN MOST RECENT JAGUAR ATTACK: IT WAS ON THIS POINT THAT SBIH DWELLED AT GREATEST LENGTH. HE CLAIMED THE GOA HAS RELIABLE INFORMATION CONFIRMING THAT MOST RECENT JAGUAR ATTACK ON THE POLISARIO WAS COORDINATED BETWEEN THE MILITARY HEADQUARTERS OF FRANCE, MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA WITH THE ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE OF NATO HEADQUARTERS. ACCEPTING THIS AS A FACT, THE GOA CANNOT HELP BUT WONDER WHETHER THERE IS A NATO/WESTERN CONSPIRACY TO LET THE FRENCH DO THE WEST'S BIDDING IN THE SAHARA. IN ANY CASE, THE GOA FERVENTLY HOPES THE WESTERN POWERS WILL NOT ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BE DRAWN INTO THE SAHARA CONFLICT BY THE FRENCH.

5. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ON FRENCH INTERVENTION: IN THE COURSE OF THE ABOVE DISCUSSIONS, SBIH MADE THE POINT THAT THE CURRENT FRENCH MILITARY INTERVENTION IN THE SAHARA AND CHAD REPRESENTS THE FIRST TIME THAT A PERMANENT MEMBER OF THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL HAS INTERVENED IN AN INTER-AFRICAN CONFLICT WITH TROOPS. THE SPECIOUS JUSTIFICATION FOR THIS INTERVENTION IS DEFENSE PACTS, HE SAID.

6 FRENCH SUPPLY OF SAM MISSILES TO MOROCCO: THE GOA CANNOT HELP BUT FEEL THREATENED, SBIH SAID, BY THE NEWS THAT FRANCE IS SUPPLYING SAM MISSILES TO MOROCCO. SINCE THE POLISARIO HAS NO PLANES, SUCH MISSILES CAN ONLY BE INTENDED FOR USE AGAINST ALGERIA.

7. COMMENT: SBIH ACTS AS THE OFFICIAL MOUTHPIECE OF ALGERIA'S FOREIGN POLICY ESTABLISHMENT AND, BEHIND IT, THE PRESIDENCY. THE GOA IS CLEARLY ANGERED AND WORRIED BY THE RETURN OF THE FRENCH TO AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THE SAHARA CONFLICT AND IS LOOKING FOR COMFORT WHEREVER IT CAN FIND IT. REGARDLESS OF WHETHER I RETURN FROM WASHINGTON WITH A PRECISE STATEMENT OF THE U.S. POSITION ON FRENCH ACTIONS, I BELIEVE IT IS IMPORTANT FOR OUR INTERESTS HERE TO NIP IN THE BUD ALLEGATIONS OF NATO KNOWLEDGE OF OR INVOLVEMENT IN FRENCH ACTIVITIES. CAN THE DEPARTMENT SUPPLY GUIDANCE ON THIS SUBJECT FOR USE IN THE NEXT FEW DAYS? HAYNES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, COMBAT OPERATIONS, MILITARY PLANS, REGIONAL DEFENSE ORGANIZATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ALGIER01528
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780209-0032
Format: TEL
From: ALGIERS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780556/aaaabvkg.tel
Line Count: 126
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 195dc19c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ALGIERS 1526
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2684041
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AMBASSADOR'S TOURS D'HORIZON WITH SENIOR GOA MFA OFFICIALS, PART II
TAGS: PGOV, PINS, SS, CD, MO, MR, FR, DA, AG, US, NATO, (SBIH, MISSOUM), (BOUSSELHAM, ABDELKADER), (HAYNES, ULRIC ST CLAIR JR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/195dc19c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

